

**Department of State Health Services  
Agenda Item for State Health Services Council  
January 12 – 13, 2006**

**Agenda Item Title:** HHS Strategic Planning

**Agenda Number:** 9

**Recommended Council Action:**

For Discussion Only

For Discussion and Action by the Council

**Background:** N/A

**Summary:** Council Chair and Executive leadership will provide an overview and facilitate discussion of the following:

- a. Local and Regional Public Health System
- b. Behavioral Health System
- c. Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention:
- d. Preparedness and Protection:
- e. Return on investment for health of Texas from business practices and technologies

**Summary of Stakeholder Input to Date (including advisory committees):** N/A

**Proposed Motion:** No Action Required

**Agenda Item Approved by:**

**Presented by:** Council Chair and DSHS Leadership

**Title:**

**Program/Division:** Consumer Affairs

**Contact Name/Phone:** Rosamaria Murillo

**Date Submitted**  
01/12/06



## Potential “Significant Impact Areas/Issues” for DSHS

### Local and Regional Public Health System

To safeguard the health of all the people of Texas, the public health system must have the capacity to perform its prevention, protection, and regulatory functions, and to effectively respond in an emergency or disaster. DSHS intends to identify specific issues related to how public health functions come together in local jurisdictions in Texas, and to how local and regional systems link into a cohesive statewide system to perform the basic mission of public health practice. Issues include:

- Resources for assuring/providing a basic level of essential public health services across Texas, and the corresponding performance standards to measure and account for effectiveness.
- The capacity of DSHS Health Service Regions and Regional Directors to perform their public health roles in:
  - Serving as local health authorities where one does not exist locally;
  - Providing/assuring local public health functions/services in conjunction with or in lieu of a local health department;
  - Anchoring and coordinating the public health system in their respective geographic portions of Texas.
- Capacity of the public health system to provide necessary levels of protection through regulatory services.

NOTE: It may be appropriate to expand the discussion of DSHS Regions as coordinators beyond traditional public health roles to include the idea of Regions as “ambassadors” to local partners for the full scope of DSHS services in their geographic areas of the state.

## Potential “Significant Impact Areas/Issues” for DSHS

### Behavioral Health System

This topic heading refers to how federal, state, and local resources for mental health and substance abuse are structured at state and local levels in Texas. The scope potentially includes hospital and community based services, state purchased and operated care, and other components under the vision of behavioral health system transformation.

Specific issues under this topic heading include:

- Mental health system transformation
- Community mental health and substance abuse service delivery systems
- Coordination of behavioral health and primary care services
- Interface with other state agencies that provide mental health services through alternate funding streams
- Mental health hospital capacity
- Interface with the other systems whose costs, outcomes, and service demand are impacted by mental health and substance abuse
- Increase knowledge dissemination and awareness to reduce stigma around mental illness

## Potential “Significant Impact Areas/Issues” for DSHS

### **Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention:**

DSHS will spearhead efforts to prevent chronic disease by promoting healthy behaviors and the policies and environments that foster and reinforce them in schools, workplaces, and communities. Unhealthy eating, physical inactivity, and tobacco use in particular are preventable risk behaviors that contribute to the prevalence of CVD, cancer, and diabetes— all major causes of death and disability in the state that can be expected to become even more significant with demographic changes in Texas.

Specific issues include:

- Primary prevention as a part of a comprehensive public health approach, including population-based strategies such as changing policies, laws, and environmental settings, reaching populations at various sites like schools, worksites, health care facilities and community locations.
- Coordination and integration of chronic disease programs at the state level.
- Development of a statewide comprehensive plan for health promotion and chronic disease prevention with specific emphasis on eliminating health disparities and improving quality of life.
- Identification, promotion, and dissemination of evidenced based and promising interventions, programs, policies and strategies.
- Expanded and strengthened public-private partnerships that are motivated to invest in a healthier population.
- Coordination among councils to provide alignment of health promotion and chronic disease policy and strategic action among public and private sector entities.

## Potential “Significant Impact Areas/Issues” for DSHS

### **Preparedness and Protection:**

This topic focuses on coordination of efforts for preparedness and the health sector's response for disasters and emergencies (including natural disasters, environmental accidents, and natural and deliberate disease outbreaks), both within Texas's system at state, regional, and local levels, and between Texas and federal/national or interstate partners. Coordination depends upon a common vision of preparedness and protection in Texas and the participation of both public and private sector members of the system.

Specific issues include:

- Strengthening public health systems of detection and response mobilization for population-level protection, and the distribution of resources based on risk and needs.
- Enhancing integration of state and local health and human service public sector agencies into response systems.
- Ensuring an effective mental health component of disaster response
- Inclusive coordination of hospitals and health care facilities (including mental health services and facilities), businesses and other private sector stakeholders, and other organizations that play critical roles in readiness and response.
- Coordination of health related agencies with state and federal disaster management structures (including readiness and response for evacuation).

## Potential “Significant Impact Areas/Issues” for DSHS

### **Return on investment for health of Texas from business practices and technologies**

DSHS will identify the benefits for health programs and health status (as well as the administrative efficiencies for the department) that could be realized through adoption of modern business practices and technologies. With agreement among partners on priorities and feasibility, DSHS will investigate technologies that can improve agency productivity and administrative efficiencies, improve data for policymakers, and improve the quality, accessibility, and seamless delivery of direct patient care and direct client services.

Specific issues under this topic include:

- Impact of technology investments on critical public health functions, in areas such as
  - Syndromic surveillance, in which data from a wide variety of sources is sent to a centralized database to identify trends or population-based anomalies that could signal an impending public health emergency, and can allow regular routine assessment of health conditions and other health status measures in aggregate populations.
  - Electronic medical records and telemedicine capacity for client services in provider organizations such as state mental hospitals and substance abuse providers
  - Internet-based database and communication tools that enable people in an emergency setting to communicate in real-time outside the normal land-line and cell-phone methods
  - Data warehouses that enable policy-makers to identify trends and patterns that lead to decisions targeting particular health-related outcomes.
  - Access to DSHS services and information using electronic communication channels (E-Government).
- Technology as an indispensable tool that enhances worker productivity, facilitates communication and effective decision-making, and provides access to a wide range of information that is not readily available through non-electronic means.